

MONTANA FEDERAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICAL SERVICE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

OFFICE OF
THE AGRICULTURAL STATISTICIAN
BOX 1726
HELENA, MONTANA

RELEASED: March 23, 1949

MONTANA PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 1949

Total plantings of principal crops in Montana this season is expected to be 3 percent larger than last year. On March 1, farmers expressed their intentions to seed 5,308,000 acres compared with 5,134,000 acres during the spring of 1948. The increased acreage will be largely comprised of new breaking or land not previously cultivated. plantings of spring wheat, corn, dry peas and potatoes are to exceed last year but will be partially offset by reduced acreage of barley, oats and sugar beets. No change in the acreage of flaxseed, dry beans and tame hay is now indicated.

Conditions generally appear favorable for another good crop year. precipitation which exceeded normal during each of the winter months (November to February), has provided good supplies of soil moisture. Early seeded crops should germinate with thick stands. surveys of snow cover on water sheds promise that irrigation water will be abundant. The supply of farm labor is expected to be adequate for the season. Large counts of grasshopper eggs in southeastern and northcentral portions of the state pose as a threat of heavy hopper damage, however concerted efforts of control should reduce infestation and crop loss.

WHEAT: Plantings of 3,702,000 acres of spring wheat are expected this spring. This is 9 percent more than the 3,396,000 acres seeded last year and the largest acreage since 1937. Last fall 1,674,000 acres of winter wheat were planted, which with the expected spring wheat plantings, would make a total of 5,376,000 acres for all wheat. This compares with 5,053,000 acres of all wheat for 1948. Abandonment of fall sown wheat may be larger than last year but should be far less than the heavy abandonment two years ago. part of the spring wheat acreage will be reseeds of winter wheat fields which have thin stands.

FEED GRAINS AND FLAX: prospective plantings of 242,000 acres of corn is indicated as of March 1. This is an 18 percent increase over the 205,000 acres planted last year and would be the largest acreage since 1925. Total acreage of feed grains, however, is expected to be less than in 1948. Aggregate plantings of corn, barley and oats will cover 1,360,000 acres compared with 1,494,000 acres last year. A sharp reduction of 18 percent in barley seedings from 904,000 acres in 1948 to 741,000 acres this year, principally accounts for the feed grain reduction. Although flaxseed acreage may shift considerably in the principal producing areas, plantings of 124,000 acres this spring will be the same as in 1948. Oat plantings of 377,000 acres will be only 2 percent less than last year.

OTHER PLANTED CROPS: sugar beet plantings are indicated to be 60,000 acres, a reduction of 6,000 acres from last year. This would be the smallest acreage since 1943 and would be 31 percent below the record plantings of 87,000 acres in 1945. The 30,000 acres intended to be planted to dry beans is unchanged from last year but would be a large peace-time acreage. Montana farmers planted 65,000 acres of beans for war demand in 1943. Reduced supplies of seed peas is principally responsible for the sharp increase in expected plantings of dry peas this spring. The intended acreage is 16,000 compared with 9,000 in 1948. The war-time plantings in 1943 reached a peak of 60,000 acres. More intense operations of commercial growers accounts for the 8 percent increase in expected potato plantings this spring. The 16,400 acres for 1949 is up 1,200 over last year but is well below the 22,000 acres planted in 1943.

MONTANA: PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 1949

CROP	AVERAGE 1938 - 1947			ACRES PLANTED		
	Acres	Yield Per Pl. Acre		1948	Indicated 1949 as %	
	planted	Amount	Unit		1949	of 1948
	(1,000 Acres)			(1000 Acres)	(1000 Acres)	(Percent)
Corn.....	193	15.4	Bu.	205	242	118
Spring wheat....	2,774	14.3	"	3,396	3,702	109
Oats.....	456	27.1	"	385	377	98
Barley.....	497	23.8	"	904	741	82
Flaxseed.....	215	5.5	"	124	124	100
Beans, dry.....	27	1186	Lbs.	30	30	100
Peas, dry.....	33	1138	"	9	16	178
Sugar beets.....	77	11.2	Tons	66	60	91
Potatoes.....	17	109	Bu.	15.2	16.4	108
All Hay 1/.....	2,082	1.21	Tons	2,368	2,344	99

1/ data for all hay relates to acres for harvest.

U. S. PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS, MARCH 1949

The smallest total acreage of spring-planted crops since the 1937-39 period appears in prospect for 1949. The decline in the total of 17 crops (including hay) surveyed at this date is from 275.0 million acres in 1948 to 270.2 million acres now in prospect. This is nearly offset, however, by the much larger acreage of winter wheat sown last fall, of which a larger proportion than usual apparently remains for harvest this season. The greatest decline in spring plantings will be in the feed grains, with smaller declines in the oilseeds -- soybeans, flaxseed and peanuts -- and most other row crops. The chief increases over last year are indicated for plantings of spring wheat, dry peas and tobacco. Spring activities are normal to advanced over most of the country. Soil moisture and irrigation water are generally in satisfactory supply. Supplies of farm labor, seeds and fertilizers are not likely to be limiting factors in acreages planted or grown in 1949.

The 1949 acreage of principal crops "planted or grown" may total nearly 361 million acres, allowing for duplications and for certain crops not yet surveyed. This would be about 1.6 million acres less than in 1948, also below the wartime peak in 1943 and 1944, but would exceed the total in any other year since 1937. Much larger total acreages were planted or grown in the 1929-33 period, the top being 375.5 million acres in 1932. If for some unforeseen reason, loss of winter wheat acreage should be greater than is now apparent, replanting to feed grains could swell the planted acreage total.

C R O P	P L A N T E D A C R E A G E S			
	Average 1938-47	1948	Indicated 1949	1949 as a per- cent of 1948
		Thousands		Percent
Corn, all.....	90,590	86,196	84,809	98.4
All spring wheat.....	18,319	19,588	20,300	103.6
Durum.....	2,677	3,245	3,392	104.5
Other spring.....	15,641	16,343	16,908	103.5
Oats.....	42,378	44,529	44,506	99.9
Barley.....	14,607	13,295	11,885	89.4
Flaxseed.....	3,472	4,889	4,713	96.4
Rice.....	1,378	1,757	1,753	99.8
Sorghums for all purposes.	16,810	13,813	12,144	87.9
Potatoes.....	2,799	2,127	1,930	93.1
Sweetpotatoes.....	717	519	489	94.2
Tobacco 1/.....	1,653	1,538	1,596	103.8
Beans, dry edible.....	2,001	1,971	1,834	93.0
Peas, dry field.....	487	309	409	132.4
Soybeans 2/.....	11,607	11,733	11,278	96.1
Cowpeas 2/.....	2,459	1,115	1,011	90.7
Peanuts 2/.....	3,466	3,879	3,175	81.9
Hay 1/.....	73,966	73,616	73,718	100.1
Sugar beets.....	869	800	766	95.8

1/Acreage harvested. 2/ Grown alone for all purposes.

P. J. Creer, Agr. Statistician in Charge
J. M. Sales, Agricultural Statistician

After Five Days Return to
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
P. O. Box 1726 - Helena, Montana

penalty for Private Use to Avoid
payment of postage \$300

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Form BAE-A-3/49-2841
Permit No. 1001

